

COLCHESTER PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

JULY 20, 2010

PRESENT: Tom Mulcahy, Pam Loranger, Tim Ahonen, and Rich Paquette.

ALSO PRESENT: Sarah Hadd, Director

1. Call to Order

Tom Mulcahy called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Robert Scheck was absent

2. Discussion of Planned Unit Development

Tom Mulcahy stated that the Commission was considering amending the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Regulations and would like information on what people would like to see changed. Brad Gardner stated that the five acre minimum for a PUD has shut the Bay down for development. He stated that he would like to see the regulations loosened. Tom Mulcahy asked him to clarify. Brad Gardner stated that he has a 1.8 acre parcel next to Rossetti Park that could be a nice in-build.

Robert Scheck joined the Commission at 7:07 p.m.

Tom Mulcahy asked how infrastructure factors into the development capacity for his lot. Brad Gardner stated that each piece of land will bear development according to the soils present and the lack of sewer would not necessarily limit development of the lots. B. Gardner stated that all approvals and regulations would still be required for the development. T. Mulcahy stated that they are trying to decide on the acreage required for PUDs.

Doug Elwood spoke to his mother-in-law's property at the corner of Holy Cross and Porters Point Road and the possibility of an in-build on the site if the minimum acreage for a PUD was reduced.

David Burke stated that he has done development in Colchester since 1985 and he would recommend removing the five acre minimum as the PUD requirements were stringent enough to ensure good development. He also recommended that the density plan requirements be removed and that division be used instead to calculate the number of units. He has stated that he has done good PUDs on less than three acres in other towns. He is not aware of any other Chittenden County towns that require density requirements. He also recommended removing the three acre requirement and the undeveloped requirement as the buffers, open space, and other requirements would ensure good development. He stressed that the density plan requirement would need to be removed or else abolishing the minimum density requirements would just be a paperwork exercise.

Tom Mulcahy asked for additional input. Brad Gardner stated that he has a piece of land off of Macrae Road and along West Lakeshore Drive. He was also aware of a parcel on Church Road and some other parcels with single-family homes that had reached the end of their life-cycles and were best as tear-downs. People would like to have a single family home instead of living in a high rise. There was a discussion about prime agricultural soils as being prohibitive to development. David Burke stated that smaller sites were less likely to trigger prime ag mitigation and that was perhaps another reason to reduce the minimum acreage requirement.

Tom Mulcahy thanked everyone for coming and closed the public discussion.

The Commission discussed the feedback. Tom Mulcahy stated that there were a few things that needed consideration: density and in-builds / tear downs. He asked if someone could buy up the whole Village and tear it down. If the rules are changed what governs that change. What prevents it from going out of control. Tim Ahonen asked if the Town had preservation requirements for historic structures. Sarah Hadd stated no. Sarah Hadd provided some background on frontage and PUDs. She recommended discussing the requirement for a density plan. Rich Paquette asked if removing the PUD minimum acreage would result in non-owner occupied infill lots. Sarah Hadd stated that it might however PUDs would require buffers and open space set asides hopefully minimizing impact to neighbors. Pam Loranger asked about how rentals would be enforced. Sarah Hadd stated that it would be up to the associations formed to limit the number of rentals however the Town approves association documents ensuring that the associations have teeth to enforce. Tom Mulchay asked what the Commission's wishes were. The Commission was in agreement that a density plan should be abolished. There was then discussion about the minimum acreage for PUDs. Tim Ahonen was in favor of 1.5 and Pam Loranger stated she was too. Tom Mulcahy stated that he was thinking 2 acres. Rich Paquette stated that he was thinking lower than two acres. Tom Mulcahy asked if an overwhelming demand would be created. Sarah Hadd stated that DRB applications were substantially down at this point. Tom Mulchay asked if a memo could be circulated to the Select Board, DRB, and staff for comment on reducing the minimum acreage to 1.5 acres. Sarah Hadd stated that this could be done. Tom Mulcahy asked for a one to two page memo to be circulated as Supplement 30. Tim Ahonen asked if it was perhaps appropriate to look at design review prior to changing the regulations. Tom Mulchay stated that it was and recommended that it be the discussion of future agendas.

3. Discussion of Severance Corners Build Out

S. Hadd provided an overview of the projected build out at Severance Corners. A presentation of the history of the parcel was presented and how the Growth Center Designation process offers relief from prime ag mitigation. The first thing was to designate a Town Center which is Severance Corners. There was a grant from the State for \$40,000 to get the Growth Center Designation. Severance Corners began development before the Growth Center Designation and was required to pay over \$100,000 for prime ag mitigation.

Some potential development could be an Inn, smaller cottages for retirees, commercial development. The buildings on Perimeter Drive are residences for PHD candidates at Albany College. The original approvals were for 152 residential units and 90,000 SF commercial (restaurant, office, retail). T. Mulcahy asked why is this called a Town Center, there is nothing there to do. S. Hadd said an anchor to provide a draw to the Town Center needs to come in.

The Commission requested that the developers come to a future meeting and discuss the potential for a higher density or additional uses to foster the sense of community within that area.

4. Minutes of July 6, 2010

Tim Ahonen made a **motion** to approve the minutes and **seconded** by Rich Paquette. The **motion** passed with a vote of 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. All members of the Commission present voted in favor of the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Minutes taken and respectfully submitted by Jane Dion.

Approved this 3rd day of August 2010

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_____	Planning Commission